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Book 52

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ADDRESSES

On the Consideration of Resolutions Relative to the Death of

Abraham Lincoln,

President of the United States,

DELIVERED IN THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF PENNSYLVANIA.

JANUARY 23, 1866,

TOGETHER WITH THE

Last Inaugural Address of President Lincoln.

HARRISBURG:

SINGERLY & MYERS, STATE PRINTERS.

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
January 25, 1866.

"On motion of Mr. M'PHERLIN,

"RESOLVED, That two thousand copies of the last Inaugural Address of the lamented LINCOLN, late President of the United States, and the resolutions adopted at the special session of the 23d inst., together with the address of the gentleman from Philadelphia, Mr. RUDDIMAN, and the remarks of the gentlemen from Cambria, Potter and Lawrence, on said resolutions, be printed in pamphlet form, for the use of the members of this House."

ADDRESSES.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

January 23, 1866.

MR. RUDDIMAN. Mr. Speaker, in pursuance of the order of this House, fixing for to-night a special session, I beg leave to offer the following resolutions :

WHEREAS, Since the last session of the Legislature of Pennsylvania, Abraham Lincoln, the President of the United States, was most foully murdered :

And whereas, In consideration of his high office, which he filled with so much wisdom and adorned with so much purity, and of the distinguished virtues which composed and enriched his character, it is proper that this House of Representatives should record their appreciation of his goodness, their sorrow at his loss, and their abhorrence of the frightful crime by which the Chief Magistrate of the nation was stricken to death :

Be it resolved, That in the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, were cog-nize one of the natural results of that spirit of rebellion by which our land has been cursed and our citizens slain—a spirit that regarded neither national duties nor social obligations, and to which alike the solemnity of an oath and the sacredness of human life addressed themselves in vain.

Resolved, That the late President of the United States so sat in his place of honor and administered its exalted functions, as to win the confidence of his people and the admiration of the world; leaving a name of unsullied brightness and a fame of imperishable splendor. He was a statesman, wise and incorruptible; a patriot, earnest and self-devoted; a leader of clear discernment and forecast, and a ruler most benignant where the calls of mercy might persuade, but ever just and firm where truth and the right

demanded. His life was full of excellence and beauty, and truly illustrated the gentle and guileless dispositions of his heart, and the high order and reach of his intellect.

Resolved, That during the four years of conflict in which the heart and head of the martyred President were burthened with the cares of a nation's destiny, he bore himself in his great office with the calm courage of a hero, the serene patience of a prophetic sense, and the dignified hopefulness of a Christian. No personal interests could detach him from the work that weighed upon him; no causes of despondency could shake his faith in the right or in the final triumph of his country's cause. To that country he gave the love and service of his soul, and for its continued greatness and glory he thought and toiled through the days and nights of four dark and weary years. He was the exponent and apostle of its grand principle of freedom and progress, and he has made his own name immortal, and that principle forever sure, by doing battle for it in his life, and sanctifying it by his death.

Resolved, That the gracious qualities of Abraham Lincoln were shown in most radiant lustre when, in the dawning of a brighter day and at the close of the fearful night which had so long hung over our land, he spoke words of fatherly tenderness and forbearance for those who deserved only the rigors of severe justice: and the assassin's monstrous villainy is the more black and fiendish from the fact, that in that very hour the great heart of the President was seeking means of safety and forgiveness for those who hated and reviled him.

Resolved, That the character and example of Abraham Lincoln are the sacred heritage of a free people; and as years add grandeur and might to our country's career, so will they give a richer perfume and a brighter halo to the name and memory of our fallen but glorious chieftain, second to none upon the pages of the world's history—first of all in a redeemed nation's gratitude and love.

The resolutions being of the nature of a bill, were read twice, and the question before the House being on the final passage of the same,

MR. RUDDIMAN said—

MR. SPEAKER:—Although nine months are over-past since millions of hearts were startled and shocked by the dread announcement that a murdered President was lying at the Capital of the nation; and although the first sad, keen, deep sorrow of a mourning people has become subdued, and we can contemplate with better judgment, with clearer reason, than we could when the passion of tears was upon us, the character of the President, and the awful crime, too, that made “the deep damnation of his taking off:”—though these months have intervened, and we can consider after all this series of days has passed, thus more clearly, thus with calmer temper, thus without the strong emotions of grief, which were exhibited at the moment of that awful event, yet it is no less becoming in us, the Representatives of the people of Pennsylvania now, than it would have been then, to make public expression of our estimate of the worth and excellence of so exalted a man; to put upon record the utterance of our grief at his loss, and our horror at the fearful means which laid the ruler of a free people low in death. I say it is fit and appropriate that this expression should be made. It is most fit and suitable that it should be made by the Representatives of Pennsylvania, here sitting in their assembled dignity; carrying with them in charge, the confidence and the trust; speaking for the intelligence and the honor of our people, and doing justice to the loyalty, the greatness, and the patriotism of the Commonwealth of our pride and love, here illustrated and represented. It is most proper and becoming, that Pennsylvania should stand high—thus recording her appreciation; that Pennsylvania should bow low—thus testifying her sorrow; for when the voice of the dead chieftain first rung out upon the air, calling to arms, announcing that the country was in danger, that men of malice and of fore-sworn oaths and violated obligations, were setting at defiance the laws of the land, and were hurling threats at the safety and perpetuity of our institutions; Pennsylvania rushed foremost, her brave and willing heroes took the first rank, and numbered earliest in the field with the soldiers for the

Union, were the valiant sons of Pennsylvania. She has ever conducted herself with such a spirit; high in her loyalty, glorious in her name, strong in her prowess for the Union, the Government and its sacred liberties. Pennsylvania has renown which other nations of the world might envy. And Pennsylvania should come to do honor, therefore, to the memory of the Chief, at whose voice she hastened into battle, and under whose rule she sat in confidence, knowing that he would do only what was right, because in his purpose, or from his heart, he was incapable of doing what was wrong. And thus, Mr. Speaker, I repeat, it is most appropriate that Pennsylvania should write her lofty tribute to the pure character and noble qualities of the great dead; and that she should express, with unfeigned utterance, her sorrow at his death. It has fallen to my lot, sir,—to my very humble ability,—to speak partially for my State in this solemn and mournful duty; to speak my own sentiments, to speak for those who sent me here, to speak, I doubt not, for every one of my brethren on that side of the House, and on this; representing, as they do, a people who admired and loved ABRAHAM LINCOLN while he lived, and who mourned for him when he was gone. I could wish that the performance of this duty had been entrusted to worthier hands.—How presumptuous it seems to me, that I should attempt to measure goodness which I can only look at to admire in the distance. How vain to even try to indicate a character so beautiful and grand as his! But it is my duty representing, in so far as I do, the State of Pennsylvania, to do respect to the mournful purpose of this hour; and if my effort be feeble; if my words breathe not in harmony with the spirit and power of the subject, it is not because I did not love the man and do not revere his sacred memory, but because I cannot reach the need of this high occasion, and am so unfitted for the burthen of this office.

A little less, I think, than five years ago, I was in the crowded streets of Philadelphia. The day was bright, the skies were clear, rich music was sending its melody abroad, and throngs of excited people were hurrying to and fro—a new President was in the

city passing on to the capital of the nation, where he should take upon him the offices of State. An untried man—an unknown man—yet one, who, because of his lofty functions and a name that was now invested with so much of dignity, because of his distinguished place, was thus sought after, thus crowded upon, thus welcomed with acclaim by the people in the streets of Philadelphia. I was among that eager and hurrying multitude. I saw that man unknown to me; perhaps unknown to all who looked upon him; and yet all were willing to testify respect to him, upon whom the people's choice had been cast as their Chief Magistrate. That was little less than five years ago. A little less than one year ago, I was again in the crowded streets of Philadelphia.—How again they were thronged; how the countless busy feet were tramping and marching! But it was not now to behold a new President; it was to gaze in sadness and tears upon the corse of a dead martyr. It was not to welcome a living man; it was to do reverence, with bowed head, and aching heart, and streaming eyes, beside the cold and evermore silent tenement of the fallen great.

I had come to Harrisburg with some of my brethren of the House of Representatives, to escort the remains of the President from this city to Philadelphia. We saw that form lying here in Death's dread state; we stood around it as mourners at the bier of one beloved; the chaste, suggestive and beautiful drapery of grief was hung in this Hall; and the scene was most solemn, touching and impressive. We followed the corpse to the car, and were permitted the privilege of journeying on the train which bore those honored remains to our city. As we passed along the way, we saw many groups of men and women—strong men, unused to tears, bending their heads and sorrowing—women, whose gentle sympathies are always true and pure, weeping the attestation of their anguish and love; and we wept in common with them. Thus we passed to the city, where four years before the chieftain had been met with a joyous welcome; and now we followed slowly in the line, as he was carried towards his last earthly resting

place. What a change in the scene! To us, from radiant mid-day to starless night; To HIM, from Earth to Heaven!

Mr. Speaker, not to dwell on these painful incidents, but to speak with somewhat of directness to the appropriate subject before the House, let me refer for a little while to the distinctive elements of the character of the great man to whose merits, and the singular beauty of whose life, we bear witness to-night.

He was a great man and a good man. Great, not because he bore the envied titles of life-long place; not great because he boasted of a proud and renowned ancestry; not great because he carried with him the certificate of the schools telling to the world how versed he stood in all the learning, philosophy and lore that could be imparted by their teachings; not great because his powers had compelled the fame of splended oratory; not great because he held a high place among the ranks of those around whom breathes poetic praise. Not great because of these. Not good, because sending forth his gifts to the world with an open hand, he told the world himself that he was of large and liberal beneficence, and therefore good; not good because he made the world to know that his was a heart, by his own declarations and his own assurance, bearing naught but love and mercy and tenderness to all mankind; not because he distributed broadcast the generous charities of humanity. No, sir; there is a greatness exceeding such as these. There is a goodness nobler than that found in the common charities of life, or in the ostentatious endowments of wealth. He was great in this excelling sense of greatness; he was good in this nobler term of goodness.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, sir, was great because he was a patriot.—How his heart swelled and his life beamed and was animate and resplendent with the love of country, burning deep in his soul. How firm and unwavering in the constancy of his devotion to that country. How, through anxious, toil-worn days, through troubled wakeful nights, ABRAHAM LINCOLN—not self-declared with word of mouth, but self-proved in the deeds and purposes of his strong and manly life—ever bore himself an unfaltering

patriot—true, earnest, self-devoted, consecrated to the country which gave him birth; to that country which demanded the best services of her loyal son, while she was passing through the anguish and terror of her almost death struggle! Her altar was the holy shrine on which his affections were laid; and there he ministered—first a priest to bless, and then a sacrifice to save.

He was great, because he was a patriot of this loftiest order; a patriot of this self-yielding, self-sacrificing spirit.

He was great, sir, because he was a statesman—not a statesman in the little cunning and pretensions of diplomacy—not a statesman in the wiles and shifts of the politician—but a statesman whose eye and comprehension were as far-reaching and as broad as the destiny of the nation itself; a statesman who understood profoundly the theory and nature of its government and who measured its every need; a statesman whose judgment took in, with full grasp, all the emergencies of his country and knew what was fittest in its darkest hour of perplexity and fear. Such a statesman was ABRAHAM LINCOLN. Not the shallow diplomatist; not the crafty politician, but the informed, the elevated, the noble and sagacious man; the honest, consistent, well judging ruler, who saw what was best in trial and what would soonest bring peace out of trial. Such, in few and inadequate words, was his greatness as a statesman.

He was great for his wisdom. How wise a man he was! How much, sir, in the kind simplicity and graceful frankness of his heart, he was like a child; and yet, in the glorious strength and stature of his intellect, how like a giant! A man of that wisdom, foreseeing with almost the sense of prophecy, foretelling with almost the certainty of prediction. We thought sometimes that the man was wild, dealing in strange vagaries, but we saw not the end as his clear mind perceived it; and yet, as the march of his announcements and of his calm convictions went forward to fulfillment with the march of events, and they came together at length, blended in wondrous harmony, every one confessed what intelligence, like almost to inspiration, was there, and of what sublime

wisdom the mind of ABRAHAM LINCOLN was composed. Truly he was great because he was wise.

He was great, sir, because he was just. Oh, how he stood in his high office amid the cruel sneers and revilings of men; and yet how just he was to its every claim—how true to its every demand. Not one of its responsibilities escaped his grave acknowledgment, not one of its solemn obligations was avoided. Personal injury could not turn him from the right; personal interest could not urge him to the wrong.

So fixed in him, and essential to his being, were the principles of truth; so directed were all his acts by the rule of an illuminated conscience; so unstained by the base tincture of sordid passions or of a selfish will, were the motives which gave force and bearing to his daily life, that he must have become false to himself to be persuaded to any course of conduct by other suggestions than those of the clearest rectitude, or affected by other inducements than such as must be sanctioned by the unbending precepts of integrity. He could not deceive, for deception was a loathsome thing to his generous apprehensions; he could not betray, for the meanness of treachery and falsehood was abhorrent to his nature; but when his confidence was once gained, and his word once given, he was to be relied upon without question, and was as sure and steadfast as the everlasting hills. He was considerate, and true, and just, alike to friend and foe.

And MR. LINCOLN was a great man, sir, because he was a courageous man. In the face of opposition and denunciation the most vehement and violent and without reason, he moved in his high career with a straightforward purpose, and that placid self-consciousness which knew that the right would assert itself ere long, and that approval be rendered to him which men either spitefully withheld or could not, with their slow vision, recognize as his due. Though misunderstood by friends, who interpreted the broad and far-extending decisions of his intellect, within the lines of their own narrow and short sighted counsels; and though maligned by enemies who interpreted him not at all, but covering their igno-

rance and shallowness with the easy garb of a sneer, made him the mark of their low derision and the theme of their ribald jests; yet he dared to pursue his direct and honest way, hoping for a kindlier spirit in some, a better intelligence in others, and leaving all to that vindication of himself and his deeds which time and results would proclaim. From the appalling work committed to him, he did not swerve either for ease or for expediency. To its accomplishment he brought the earnest hands and the resolute nerve needed for the almost superhuman task; and rising, with every fresh occasion, to the supremest altitude of duty, he went serenely on to victory, and conquered, where other men would have sunk over-mastered and defeated.

And in all these, what qualities of greatness made up the character of our President! This is the kind, sir, it occurs to me, that is of that excelling greatness—great above the schools; great above ancestry, renown and honors; great above all the mere incidents of title and of place, which give most distinction and credit with the world; great because grown and uplifted into greatness himself by the very powers and majesty of his genius. These make ABRAHAM LINCOLN great in an excellent degree.

He was a good man, sir. And to be good, as he was, is to be great. Saying that ABRAHAM LINCOLN was a good man, is saying nothing less nor more than that he was a great man. He was good because of his virtues. How his daily life was radiant, and beautiful, and clear with the virtues of his nature! How unsullied every page of his illustrious career! How true to the best instincts and impulses of humanity! How acquitted in every conscientious discharge of duty, whether to himself or to his fellows! How pure, how correct, what a model for us all! He was a good man because he was a virtuous man.

He was good, sir, because of his earnest, out-gushing humanity. What a tender heart the great and good President of the people possessed! Neither the sharp requitals of anger, nor the slow resentments of malice, could mingle with the current of his wide-reaching philanthropy. No appeal could be made to him even

by those who had injured and reviled him—no appeal could be made to his humanity and mercy, that was not answered with the soft response “that turneth away wrath,” and enforced by the willing act which does good even where evil has been received. Such was the overflowing kindness of this good man’s heart. Permit me to illustrate it by a single incident. On a certain day, at an hour early in the morning, MR. LINCOLN was waited upon by a person, who announced himself as being in great trouble and haste, and desiring an interview with the President. MR. LINCOLN, as was his custom when thus sought after, though perhaps enjoying repose—much needed repose, after the many weary hours of his labor—as was his custom, he attended upon the gentleman, and learned that his request was of moment. Said the person, “MR. LINCOLN, I have been opposed to you in politics, I have spoken harsh things about you, I have done what I could to wound you; I want to be frank and tell you the truth; I have not deserved consideration at your hands; but, sir, I am in great trouble, my heart is almost breaking; my boy is confined in prison and is under sentence of death; and I cannot leave this place, I cannot go home to the mother of my child and tell her there is no hope of his deliverance; what, what shall I do, Mr. President? I do not ask this with any claim, sir; I do not ask it as deserving it of your hands; but Oh, for God’s sake, give me some word of consideration and show to me some indication of pity, that I may bear back to my wife a token that the President is merciful and has listened to my request.”—MR. LINCOLN, taking his hand, replied: “My dear sir, do not be uneasy, do not be at all disquieted about this matter. I have nothing to do now with what you have said about me, or done to me. If I can show in the disposition of my heart towards you, that I have a care for your boy, that I am touched with concern for his welfare, let me show it to you in what manner I best may.” The person responded with tears in his eyes and thankfulness on his lips, acknowledging, with broken words, the kindness of the President. MR. LINCOLN at once wrote out for him

an order directed to the keeper of the jail, in which the prisoner was lodged, and told the father to go and be of good cheer, his boy should be released. And the son of the man who had done the wrongs he had confessed, was saved from death. How he illustrated in this gracious act the benign spirit of the Master, who went about doing good! Abused, ill-treated, ill-spoken of, and yet returning good for evil and doing deeds of mercy where another would have answered with impatience, or have retaliated with the severest measure of vindictiveness. ABRAHAM LINCOLN was a good man, because he was a humane and merciful man.

Best of all, sir, ABRAHAM LINCOLN was a good man, because he was a christian. Not in the parade and outcry of over-much profession, but in the meek and quiet observance of the teachings and example of the Saviour of men. His confidence in God was unbounded, reliant, devout. From the moment of leaving his home in the west to take his high station among the rulers of the earth—from that hour he expressed his trust and dependence upon God; and his daily life showed forth the piety of his spirit, and disclosed that he dwelt in intercourse with his Maker; and that his faith and hopes were in Him. It was the firm sentiment and conviction of his heart; it was the oft spoken confession of his lips, that without that trust, without that confidence, without the help of the Everlasting Arm, he must fail in the work of his hands, and his imperilled country must fall.

These elements, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me, make up a character of lustrous splendor, of greatness, of goodness, that has never been surpassed, and is seldom equalled; and in all these respects, the President, Patriot, Hero, Christian, to whose memory we are met to-night to do honor; was pre-eminently a great and a good man

So much, sir, for the grand attributes, so far as I have dared even to touch them, of this venerated and fallen chieftain. A few words now, with the patient indulgence of the House, as to the career of the President in his troublous term of office, and I shall have ended my remarks.

When Mr. LINCOLN entered upon the discharge of his arduous duties—duties that he had not been schooled in, for he had never been brought up in close intimacy and intercourse with those who held the reins of State, and controlled the affairs of Government; but when Mr. LINCOLN first entered upon the discharge of these duties, the sky was lowering with gloom and blackness; the storm was beginning to gather overhead; the mutterings of thunder were making themselves heard, precursive of a wild and boisterous night, and the hearts of men began to tremble and quake within them. It was a time which promised nothing but evil, an hour which foreboded nothing but trial and struggle, and tempest and danger to him who should sit at the head of the nation. But Mr. LINCOLN entered upon his duties hopeful, trustful, buoyant. He stood in that high place through four eventful years. But what anxious, burthened, toilsome years they were. Wonder was it that the heart of the President through that long siege of conflict, and solicitude, and bitterness, was not crushed and broken by the weight that oppressed it! Wonder was it that his reason was not rocked and rocked into the fearful vacancy of insanity, by the tumultuous cares that dashed against it day and night, through those terrible years of blood! Wonder was it that he survived them as he did! Wonder was it, that looking forward, he still could see the gleams of peace in the distance—could see what he knew to be the star of promise shining for him and for the country that he loved! He was urging his way through an angry sea, commanding the ship of state in all these four years, and never from his post. Shoals were about him, storms were beating with a most terrific fury, the mad waters were lashing him on every side; there seemed to be nothing but darkness above and around; there were gale and tempest and tornado, and the threatenings of the overwhelming flood; and yet the great President, with watchful eye and controlling hand, stood firm amid it all. There were fires within the vessel's hold, and yet that giant heart, storm-beaten but unfearful and unyielding, kept its place at the helm, determining to ride the ship to safety, or, if its timbers must burst and

fall apart, then sink with it to destruction. And while there were thus tempests without, and while the flames of sedition were burning within, the enemy abroad were hurling at him the shot of their *neutral* guns, thinking to break the grasp of that strong right hand and unnerve that stalwart heart. But it was among things impossible. He rode the ship gallantly along. He staid by her in all her danger, and guided her through every hazard of that mighty conflict; his greatness and goodness mantling over all, and he himself, the master spirit and genius, giving lustre and radiance, and shining out in purity amid the darkness and peril that were on every hand. This was ABRAHAM LINCOLN, the President of the United States, the towering man of might, through all these years of strife, of labor and of blood. This was the man, sir, against whom the red hot breath of envy hissed its scorching blast. This was the man, sir, against whom the language of hate was bitter and devilish. This was the man at whom malice and slander were loud and riotous. This was the man against whom the stretched out arm of detraction was casting its slime and filth—to what end? Against the man who was saving the country for those who hated him; the man who was preserving a Government that had been glorious, that it might be perpetuated, glorious still, to the children of those who reviled and decried him. Poor fools!

“They did but flout their pointless arrows at the sun,
Which still, in full-orbed majesty and light,
Kept his unbroken way.”

Why, he stood amid the buffetings as calm as the glory of the noon-day; he stood amid the tempest of sneering, and scoffing, and scurrilous derision, and lies, like an angel of light doing the mission of mercy and the errand of God. How futile! how vain! How like the harmless tossings of the frothy waves against the breast of the high-lifted and eternal rock!

But this great man, so constant, so upright, through these four weary years of struggle, through these four dreadful years of an aching brain, and an anguished heart, by and by came near the end. The dawn was glimmering; the day was lighting up; the

rest was just at hand; and the heart of the good man, catching the glory of the new morning, was speaking to itself, "peace, peace, after long and heavy toil;" and to the wanderers and those who had been in error and rebellion, sending out the accents of forgiveness, after their desperate work. How his heart beat with mercy; how it abounded in gentleness and goodness. And yet even in that hour, when the ship of state was riding into haven, and when this pure man breathed the words of peace and love to those who had mocked him and done him wrong—even then, hatred must have a victim, and malignant and devilish wickedness must have a sacrifice. And that victim, and that sacrifice was found in him, the highest in the state, the lowliest in his humility, the most unbounded in his goodness and generosity. And thus ABRAHAM LINCOLN fell, murdered, martyred, immortal!

"Sore heart, so stopped when it at last beat high;
Sad life, cut short just as its triumph came."

But is ABRAHAM LINCOLN dead? Is the Magistrate of the United States, who sank beneath the assassin's bloody hand, dead? No. The form that bore his immortal part, lies in that western spot, where the last radiance of day gilds the frontlet of evening and kisses the hero's grave; and it crumbles there—"ashes to ashes, dust to dust." But ABRAHAM LINCOLN is *not* dead. His name, his excellence, his character, his greatness, his goodness, his example, his sweet mercy, and all the virtues of his brave life, will live, while ever the shining heavens are above us, or the earth sends out God's rich fragrance to bless and teach us. *He is not dead, but liveth!*

Sir, from the old world and the new, voices of eulogy have been wafted to the resting place of the great chieftain. From thousands of hearts have come the mingled tributes of tears and praise, and have hallowed and exalted the name and memory of ABRAHAM LINCOLN. To all these richer offerings I add my simple leaves of laurel and of evergreen, and lay them with reverent humility and with sorrowing affection, at the tomb of the gentle, the pure, the immortal martyr.

"And when shall cease to give its light the sun,
When life, and earth, and time, their race have run,
Then LINCOLN'S fame will cease—with that of WASHINGTON."

MR. PERSHING said—

MR. SPEAKER:—It is to me, sir, a matter of regret that the gentlemen from Philadelphia [Mr. RUDDIMAN] when, the other day, he made the motion to hold a session this evening for the purpose of considering the resolutions which have been presented to the House, did not at that time present his resolutions in order that they might be printed, and members have an opportunity of reading them. We have heard them read, but it would be very difficult, of course, to comprehend the entire series of resolutions as they have been read. In this case it is necessary for me say that I have not risen to make any formal speech or deliver any formal eulogy upon President LINCOLN. I am one of those who opposed his election on both occasions when he was a candidate. I have repeatedly, on the floor of this House, as gentlemen here well know, deemed it my duty, in the discharge of the obligations of a representative here, to oppose some of the measures of his administration; and yet, sir, I think I can say truthfully, and appeal to the knowledge of every gentleman who has been associated with me here, that I have always discussed the measures of his administration in a proper spirit, and have never said anything that could be construed into disrespect to the President of the United States.

The time, I think, has not yet come, sir, when the measures of Mr. LINCOLN's administration can be impartially considered. That must be the duty of the future historian. As Representatives upon this floor, to-night, we find those who have been his warm, his ardent and consistent supporters, who have cordially endorsed every act of his administration, and we also find others who, whilst they have endorsed some of the acts of his administration, have just as honestly and conscientiously opposed many of the acts which he deemed necessary for the suppression of the rebellion.

The month of April, 1865, Mr. Speaker, was emphatically the most memorable month in the history of this nation. So many and so important events never were crowded together in the history of any nation in the same space of time. The beginning of

the month, as you will recollect, found the armies of LEE and GRANT confronting each other ; the armies of JOHNSTON and SHERMAN in hostile array against each other ; JEFFERSON DAVIS, the recognized President of the so-called Southern Confederacy, and ABRAHAM LINCOLN, strong in the confidence of the people, as I will admit, as was indicated by the large majority by which he was elected over such a hero and statesman as GEORGE B. M'CLELLAN, was the acknowledged head of the nation. Before the end of that month the armies of LEE had surrendered to GRANT ; JOHNSTON and his army were prisoners in the hands of SHERMAN ; JEFFERSON DAVIS was a fugitive, and President LINCOLN a murdered man ! Whilst our cannons were thundering, our towns illuminated, and the thanks of the people were ascending to Heaven over the intelligence that the war was about ended by the surrender of LEE, while the lightning was leaping along the wires cheering the hearts of all with this intelligence, that same lightning was closely followed by the sad and startling news that the President had been assassinated within the very walls of the capital. I trust, sir, that such a dark spot in our history may never occur again so long as we are a people.

Mr. Speaker, we can, to some extent, appreciate the emotions which must fill the soul of every American citizen as he stands beside the grave of the murdered President. As you stand by the tomb of WASHINGTON at Mount Vernon, or by the grave of JEFFERSON at Monticello, or look upon the spot where sleeps the lion-hearted JACKSON at the Hermitage, strange emotions thrill the heart ; and yet, WASHINGTON, JEFFERSON and JACKSON died peacefully in their homes, and were permitted, from their dying couches, to send out words of counsel and warning to their countrymen. President LINCOLN was struck down suddenly by the hand of the assassin, and this night fills a bloody grave.

But there is one thing, Mr. Speaker, in the history of President LINCOLN, which I can most cordially and will most willingly endorse. At no time, even in the darkest period of that terrible conflict through which we have passed so successfully, did Presi-

dent LINCOLN countenance, for one moment, the idea that any State was out of the Union, or could be taken out of it. There is no line in any message of his; no word in any proclamation; no public act or declaration that recognizes less than thirty-six stars upon the national banner. For this, sir, I can most cordially thank him this night.

So far as his Unionism was concerned, I was his ardent supporter; and, Mr. Speaker, not to detain the House any longer, if I were called upon to write the epitaph which should mark his monument, I could think of no nobler words, none more befitting his character, none better adapted to our present situation, than the closing words of his second inaugural address: "With malice toward none, with charity to all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and orphans; to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations."

These are noble words, words entirely worthy of the American statesman, words of the man, who at that moment, more than at any other period of his life, was the centre of the hopes and the fears of millions of people. They are words of charity, of hopefulness and of counsel. And if the spirit of our public councils can now be guided by these words, then the restoration of these States to all their constitutional relations is near at hand. But if that spirit is disregarded and trampled upon, no man can predict what troubles the future will bring upon us.

MR. MANN said—

Since it was resolved to hold a session this evening to consider resolutions in relation to the death of ABRAHAM LINCOLN, I have been laboring under such an indisposition in health, as entirely to unfit me for any preparation whatever for a consideration of the subject; yet the example of the gentleman from Cambria [Mr. PERSHING] has induced me to make a few remarks on this occasion. And I heartily thank that gentleman for having entered

into this discussion with so frank a spirit as he has shown.

The gentleman from Philadelphia [Mr. RUDDIMAN] has so ably discussed these resolutions and the character of ABRAHAM LINCOLN, that it would seem hardly proper for one so unused to addressing public assemblies as myself, without any preparation, to attempt to add a single word to what he has so ably said. I cannot, however, permit this occasion to pass without expressing, by way of addition to the estimate which that gentleman has given of the character and greatness of ABRAHAM LINCOLN, an idea which I think he passed over somewhat lightly.

I may have a misapprehension of the true character of ABRAHAM LINCOLN, but as I estimate it, it consists chiefly in his thorough understanding of the spirit and declarations of the forefathers of this country as to the right which this nation has to exist. If I understand American history correctly, this nation had no right to exist except as it lived up to the Declaration which our forefathers put forward as the reason for their severing their connection with the mother country and establishing a nation of their own. Now, what reason did they give to the world, what reason did they advance as giving them a claim to the favor of God in their attempt to establish a nation here? Why, that among certain self-evident truths were these: that all men are born free and equal, that they are endowed with certain inalienable rights, that among these inalienable rights are the right to life, the right to liberty and the right to the pursuit of happiness; and that to maintain and establish these rights, governments are instituted among men; and that when any government fails to establish these purposes, it is not only the right of the people, but it is their duty to overthrow it.

Now, sir, if that be true, then this nation had no right to exist when it failed to maintain and establish these inalienable rights. And I feel that this was the greatness of ABRAHAM LINCOLN, that he saw and felt this truth, that he realized that this nation was not maintaining these inalienable rights, and that because of its failure in this grand duty there was great danger that the nation would cease to exist. And so feeling, so seeing with his prophetic

vision, he brought the nation back to its original purpose. To his natural strength of character are we therefore indebted for our present position. Relying upon the right, by a simple proclamation, by the scratch of his pen, he brought the nation to its original stand-point, declaring by the authority which he held as President of the United States, that all men under the American flag should henceforth and forever be free.

That, Mr. Speaker, I understand to be the true feature of ABRAHAM LINCOLN's greatness. Because he saw that the nation had departed from the principles upon which it was established and had thereby forfeited its right to live, he determined to bring it back to that original stand-point and thus re-assert, before God and the world, its right to continued existence; and by that simple proclamation of emancipation he brought it back in all its purity, secured the favor of Heaven and vindicated the right of the nation to exist forever, if it shall continue to maintain the position secured for it by the goodness and greatness of ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

MR. M'KINLEY said—

We are not here to-night to deplore the loss of a great military chieftain, one who has waded through seas of blood to reach a throne and wear a crown, but we come here to pay our tribute to the memory of the pure patriot, the wise statesman, the honest man. In discussing the resolutions before the House, it may be well to take a retrospective view of the history of our martyred President. We find him a poor boy in his western home, without education or influential friends to aid or encourage him in his onward and upward course. But by his own untiring efforts, and the force of his intellect, he placed himself in position of influence and trust. We see him the brightest ornament of the bar, the leader in the legislative halls of his adopted state. We next find him on the political rostrum, without a peer, advocating the cause of justice and right, the able champion of the immortal truths embodied in the Declaration of Independence, and soon, as the first choice of a free people, he is called to fill the Presidential chair, the highest and most exalted position in the gift of his

countrymen. I would rather be President of these United States than sway the sceptre of Imperial France. Called, as he was, to administer the affairs of State under the most trying circumstances, how well he performed his part. He found an impoverished treasury, plundered arsenals, perjured officials, a fleet scattered on distant seas, an army almost disbanded and eight millions of people in open and avowed rebellion against his authority; yet, with a firm hand, a cool head and an honest heart, he stands like a rock in mid ocean, while the dark waves of rebellion dash and foam around him. Truly, ABRAHAM LINCOLN was a great man. A man who was always faithful, always true to his better instincts. A man whose mind took in at one grasp all the great questions of the day, weighed them dispassionately, and decided them so wisely, that his countrymen never wished a decision of his reversed, a line erased or a word re-called. To ABRAHAM LINCOLN, more than to any other man, are we indebted for the peace and prosperity which has at last crowned our once bleeding and distracted country. To him we owe the immortal Proclamation of Freedom, which emancipated four millions of bond men, and removed forever that dark blot which had so long dimmed our country's escutcheon. An act which the whole civilized world applauded and which will perpetuate his memory for all time to come.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN was not only a great statesman and a pure patriot, but he was also a sincere Christian; he gave to this nation a religious tone which it never possessed before.

But while we commemorate his virtues, let us not forget that his life was the last great sacrifice laid upon the altar of his bleeding country. And never, since the day when "WILLIAM THE SILENT" lay bathed in blood in his own audience chamber, his noble heart pierced by the assassin's knife, has such a blow fallen on any people. It came like the chill of death on the nation's heart, in the hour of her rejoicing. Strong men grew pale, and tears fell fast from eyes unused to weep. Hoary age and lisping youth, alike mourned the loss of our beloved President.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

Of ABRAHAM LINCOLN, on the Occasion of his Second Inauguration as President of the United States, March 4, 1865.

FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN:—At this second appearing to take the oath of the Presidential office, there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first. Then, a statement, somewhat in detail, of a course to be pursued, seemed fitting and proper. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public declarations have been constantly called forth on every point and phase of the great contest which still absorbs the attention and engrosses the energies of the nation, little that is new could be presented. The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is as well known to the public as to myself; and it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all. With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured.

On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago, all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it—all sought to avert it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to *saving* the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city seeking to *destroy* it without war—seeking to dissolve the Union, and divide effects, by negotiation. Both parties deprecated war; but one of them would *make* war rather than let the nation survive; and the other would *accept* war rather than let it perish. And the war came.

One-eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union, even by war; while the Government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it. Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has

already attained. Neither anticipated that the *cause* of the conflict might cease with, or even before the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God; and each invokes his aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered—that of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes. “Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh.” If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offences which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war, as the woe due to those by whom the offence came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to him? Fondly do we hope—fervently do we pray—that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said “The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.”

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations.

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